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ABSTRACT

Although newspaper reading has declined for the entire population in recent years, the decline has been particularly precipitous among young adults approximately 18 to 24 years old. This first part of a two-part report discusses an investigation dealing with young people and newspapers, which involved collecting data on reading habits, television-viewing habits, and demographic patterns of young people; polling members of the publishing industry and experts in such fields as sociology and education; and speaking with groups of young people in all parts of the country. This part of the report provides an introduction and an overview and discusses the background of the study, the research plan, and preliminary findings. It advances numerous hypotheses for the decline in newspaper readership among young adults, based on findings of the investigation. (GW)

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YOUNG PEOPLE AND NEWSPAPERS

An Exploratory Study

PART I

Introduction, Overview and Summary of Conclusions

Prepared for:

The Harte-Hanks Newspapers, Inc.

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May, 1976

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INTRODUCTION

This report covers the first phase of an investigation dealing with "Young People and Newspapers" sponsored by Harte-Hanks Newspapers, Inc., publishers of over fifty newspapers across the country and conducted by Yankelovich, Skelly and White, Inc.

In deciding to sponsor the study and to share the findings with the entire newspaper industry, the Harte-Hanks organization was guided by its own strong beliefs that:

1. The youth market represents a major threat and challenge to the newspaper field.

2. The problem is industry-wide and requires an industry-wide effort in dealing with it.

3. Time is running out -- and that the moment for a major, sustained effort on the part of the industry is now.

The goals of this particular study are modest. Its aim is to get the ball rolling by:

.... generating interest,

.... stimulating dialogue,

.... identifying the parameters of the problem,

.... collecting the ideas and hypotheses of those closest to the problem -- leading publishers, editors and research executives,

.... seeking insights from outside "experts" whose interests and experiences have direct relevance to the problem -- representatives of other media, educators, psychologists, youth authorities, manufacturers with particular success in marketing to young people,

.... involving youth themselves -- to insure that their own views, needs, interests, ideas will be an integral part of any future plans and projects,

.... and, finally, to synthesize all of this information -- and to come up with some preliminary suggestions for what really needs to be done.

THE BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In an era in which the country's newspaper publishing industry is on the threshold of major technological decisions likely to affect communications for decades to come, there is one subject which continues to confound, confuse, mystify and deeply concern editors, publishers, advertisers and executives from coast to coast, in metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas, in small towns and big cities. The subject is the relationship of the newspapers to young people -- with even the definition of young readers hard to delineate, much less consensus on the parameters, character or causes of the problem.

Indeed, the most fascinating phenomenon is the extent to which the country's preoccupation with young people, so much the focus of the sixties, has now caught up with the newspaper publishing industry. As one publisher remarked:

> "It's kind of ironic. Ten years ago young people made the kind of headlines that sold papers. Now they're our major marketing problem."

The ideas and concerns of the industry with the problem are manifested in many different ways:

.... Some members are disturbed by declining circulation figures among young readers.

.... Others are less sanguine -- believing that the industry's relations with young people have always been tenuous, and as in the past, will be resolved by maturation, young people settling down, getting married, buying homes .... and becoming newspaper readers.

.... Several have suggested that it is television which has created the problem -- setting different standards for the kinds and amounts of information wanted. Television is pointed to as a main competitor for reader time. Some have raised the McLuhan theory that the medium has become the message.

.... Many point to changing youth life-styles and values as the major factor.

.... Questions are raised about reading levels and current educational methods.

.... Marketing sophisticates in the industry point to the difficulties generated by a fragmented market within a market -- and the differences between down-scale and up-scale young people.

.... And then there are the parents within the industry -- men and women who have made newspaper publishing not only a vocation but a lifetime commitment, and who see their own "heirs" turned-off by traditional newspapers.

One publisher explained it this way:

> "The problem of our industry and young people is not a new one -- been around a long time -- but right now it is festering and metastasizing."

Steps Taken

Individually and collectively, the industry has attempted to tackle the situation. Newspaper after newspaper has conducted studies to find out more about young people and their needs. Journalism schools have participated actively in the pursuit of information. The industry, itself, through the Newspaper Advertising Bureau, the Newspaper Research Council and the American Newspaper Publishers Association have similarly been involved with this problem.

In many ways, however, the real difficulty has been to get a handle on the situation. By getting a handle, we mean:

.... Assembling the most relevant hard data and seeing what they mean.

.... Mining the minds of the industry for their input.

.... Learning from the "enemy" -- television, specialized magazines, "underground" newspapers.

.... Translating sociology and psychology into action programs.

.... Listening to young people as an essential part of the diagnostic process.

> .... And finally, by ending up with a working definition of the problem, a series of hypotheses for testing, better understanding of the implications of these hypotheses, and a program for testing and quantifying them.

This study, hopefully, represents a start in this direction.

HOW THE RESEARCH WAS CONDUCTED

From the outset of the project, it was easy to be overwhelmed by the complexity of the problem, the hunger of the industry for definitive information and the recognition that the approach and objectives of this first exploratory study must be limited. With this in mind, we established a number of criteria for the study.

1. The Focus: While recognizing that every facet of young people's lives have some relationship to their reading habits and perceptions, we attempted to concentrate on those aspects of their life styles and values which appear to be most relevant to newspaper reading versus nonreading.

2. Methodology: With the exception of the hard data collected from other sources, we have made no attempt to quantify the data other than in the broadest terms -- for example, consensus versus disagreement, most versus a few, and of course, readers versus nonreaders. This approach made it possible to conduct a more flexible and productive exploratory phase by enabling us to ask different respondents different questions when appropriate and to change the interviewing guide as we proceeded with the study.

3. Breadth, Not Depth: Similiarly in this study, our objective was to explore as many different pertinent areas of information as possible rather than to probe any one in depth or detail. Our assignment as we saw it was to engender meaningful hypotheses and to roughly structure their probable priorities -- rather than to come up with definitive findings.

4. Avoiding Duplication: We are mindful of the many important research projects already conducted on this subject or now underway. Specifically, we are referring to published studies by the Newspaper Advertising Bureau[1]; Tom Copeland's "Youth Research Program" sponsored by the Copley International Corporation, but involving a cooperative effort by many other newspapers as well; published studies by Gallup, National Opinion Research Center, Roper and our own organization; the magazine industry and television advertising bureaus on reading and viewing habits. To the extent possible, we have attempted to incorporate this information into the hypotheses generating process, recognizing that passing time means retesting and revalidating some of this information.

In the course of our investigation, we have also been in touch with Gerald Grotta, Associate Professor of Journalism at the

University of Oklahoma and Professor Max McCombs of the Newhouse School of Public Communication at Syracuse University about the nature of the projects they are now conducting on this subject. While some duplication is inevitable, we have tried to supplement rather than parallel these efforts. It is our understanding that Professor Snow, for example, through the auspices of the ANPA, is attempting to pull together all available information on such subjects as reading frequency, time spent reading, content priorities, etc., and to develop a complete bibliography. By contrast, our model has been to collect as much of the material as was required for this particular project -- with the understanding that the ANPA would have access to both reports in making any future plans.

5. Privileged Information and Confidentiality: Much of the data on the newspaper youth market, however, is confidential and conducted for strategy purposes. To protect the confidentiality of this type of material made available to us, we have refrained from making any observations about specific markets. The same approach is true with reference to the focus groups where young people spoke about specific papers. Instead, we have only used that input with broader implications for the industry as a whole, and referring to the particular area only in general geographic or descriptive terms.

6. Yankelovich, Skelly and White, Inc. Studies: In the course of the past decade, our own firm has been steeped in many projects with direct relevance to this project. From 1967 on, for example, we have been tracking the values and attitudes of youth.[2/] Similarly, we have been engaged in a syndicated study called Monitor which annually studies social trends of major importance to marketers. We have also been privileged to conduct confidential studies on newspaper readership for many outstanding newspapers -- i.e., The San Francisco Newspaper Printing Company, The New York Times, The Detroit Free Press, The Chicago Tribune, The New York Daily News, The Scranton Times, The Gannett Company and, of course, Harte-Hanks. We have drawn fully upon the rich background provided by this experience -- carefully protecting the confidentiality of any privileged information, while feeling free to use already published data.

7. Technology: Potential technological breakthroughs in the industry were touched upon only tangentially when we asked young respondents to describe their ideas about the newspaper of the future, or discussed the impact on young people of audio-visual communication methods in the schools. Basically, the research centered on the "now" and the "immediate future" -- but with the belief that many of the insights will be useful even in shifting to a new form of in-home information dissemination format.

8. Other Limitations: Many of the major areas of interest to the newspaper industry, such as, distribution, price, and advertising are treated only in a single dimensional way -- their potential relationship to reading and nonreading of newspapers.

9. "Actionable" - Not A Criterion: In generating hypotheses we have not limited the subjects to necessarily practical or actionable concepts. For example, we blue-skied with the young residents about the world of the future and the role of newspapers -- or what they wanted to find in their newspapers right now without regard to feasibility or economics. As a result, some of the suggestions may be immediately useful to the individual user of the research; others only provide clues and insights; still others are already underway in individual markets.

10. Conclusions and Recommendations: Specific suggestions for product changes, policies, etc. are included in the lists of hypotheses -- and are treated as such. Our conclusions in the Overview relate to the diagnosis of the problem and recommendations for establishing priorities and the next steps in an information gathering process. In spelling out these recommendations, we have deliberately refrained from coming up with a detailed research plan -- fully recognizing that this is the responsibility of the industry itself.

DATA COLLECTION

In preparing this report, we have, as indicated, used a number of different approaches in the data collection:

1. We searched the literature.

2. We collected available relevant hard data on:

   .... newspaper readership

   .... television viewership

   .... radio audiences

   .... magazine readership

   .... demographic changes among young people (i.e., changing rates of mobility, marriage and family patterns)

3. We looked for available attitudinal and opinion data that bore on the problem (i.e., media image and influence)

4. We harvested our own files and experiences.

5. We sent out a request to over seventy-five publishers, editors, researchers for their

ideas, input and studies and often had the opportunity of interviewing them as well as receiving their written responses

6. We interviewed a complex network of "experts", including:

.... Academicians in the fields of sociology, psychology, communications and journalism.

.... Directors of reading in school programs.

.... Experts in verbal and reading skills and testing programs.

.... Black and Union leaders.

.... Consumer goods manufacturers.

.... Magazine editors -- of general, news, and special interest magazines.

.... Publishers of textbooks and audio-visual aids.

.... Publishers and editors of the "underground" papers.

7. Finally, and perhaps most important, we spoke with and reviewed tapes of focus group sessions with groups of young people in all parts of the country -- New York, the Midwest, the South and the West.

The groups were deliberately diverse -- representing both a good cross section as well as special groupings.

Some of the groups were held with young people living in smaller towns -- such as Bryan/College Station in Texas; others with suburbanites; residents of college towns; ghetto dwellers and more affluent, better educated, middle class young people. We spoke to unemployed blue collar workers and Ph.D.'s already ensconced in their professions. Some of the respondents were housewives; others -- working women. In all, the views of several hundred young people -- readers and nonreaders -- are part of this study.

OVERVIEW

AND SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

"Amid a multitude of projects, no plan is devised."

Publilius Syrus (Circa 42 B.C.)

This report represents the results of an initial dialogue -- a discussion between the newspaper industry -- its editors, publishers, and researchers -- and the young adults of the country, young men and women in the 18 to 30 year old category. In the interests of expanding the dialogue we have also asked for help from experts in other fields -- people who deal with, publish for, communicate with or study young people. The stimulus for the project was based on the recognition of mutual needs:

.... the needs of the newspaper industry for a continuing flow and reservoir of young readers,

.... the needs of young people for information which will help them to live fuller, richer, more meaningful lives, and

.... the needs of society for an informed citizenry.

Our goals, as stated at the outset, were:

1. To define the problem.
2. To accumulate, seek out, organize and initiate the thinking of the most interested parties -- the industry and young people.
3. To search for signs of consensus, disagreement, lack of information or understanding on the part of the medium and/or the young adult audience.
4. To separate hypotheses from proven facts.
5. To separate long term meaningful trends from temporary manifestations.
6. To differentiate between industry-wide problems and needs and those of the individual newspapers and competitors in the marketplace.
7. To look for some immediate and obvious solutions.
8. To establish priorities for the next steps.
9. Perhaps most important of all, to keep the dialogue going.

What have we learned from the dialogue so far?

Defining the Problem

The numbers tell the story. Taking into account the postwar baby boom, declining newspaper readership over a ten year period has cost the industry a reservoir of 2,500,000 young readers. Translated into its simplest terms, there has been a decline in newspaper penetration among the 18 to 24 year olds from a 1967 base of 71% to a 1974 level of 61%.3/

While attrition in the young adult market is part of a general decline in newspaper readership, the sharper rate of decline makes it a unique problem. All newspaper reading over the same decade declined by less than 4%; young adults (18 to 24 years of age) by 10%.

Other qualities of the young adult segment suggest that it could easily be a forerunner or an indicator of the future -- unless the tide is reversed:

> .... This is the first television generation.
>
> .... Unlike those over 25 years of age, the 18 to 24 year olds are no longer graduates of the turbulent years of the sixties -- but the first representatives of a new generation -- the decade of the seventies.

> .... In terms of demographic characteristics, they are the best educated and most affluent young people this nation has produced. They are also the most mobile.

A Temporary Versus a Lasting Phenomenon

While many members of the industry recognize the problem, they believe that it is identified with the longer maturation and socialization process of this generation -- who get married later, stay in school longer, delay having children, put off buying homes. Once they reach this next stage in their development, community interests, family involvement, job demands will all encourage them to follow in the footsteps of other generations and become regular newspaper readers.

To date, there is no longitudinal data to refute or substantiate this belief -- but it is clearly required, and before it is too late. Arguing against the theory, even at this time, are the newspaper reading levels for the next age group (25 to 34 year olds) which suggest that no improvements have occurred in their reading habits over a ten year period. In 1967, when they were 18 to 24 years old, the current 25 to 34 year old age group was still at the 71% level; in other words, there is no bulge in the distribution curve to support the idea of an influx of young readers as they begin to "settle down" -- at least before they are 35 years of age.

One Last Vestige of the Sixties?

Another theory of the industry is that the present young adult market, while not graduates of the sixties, still represent the last vestiges of the values, rebelliousness, counter-culture qualities of their older siblings, and that the next group will be different -- more serious, more traditional. Perhaps this is the case -- and should be examined for its verities. As a footnote, however, we might add that our own most recent studies of young teen-agers 4/ indicates greater concern with economic problems, but a continued permeation of the youth values.

Outside of proprietary studies, however, we have not yet seen any figures on attitudes toward or use of newspapers by either high school or college students.

Diagnosis of the Problem

In all, close to a hundred different hypotheses and/or partial hypotheses were generated by the discussions with young people, the interviews with experts and members of the industry, and the exploration of available research.

In the interest of managability, we have attempted to synthesize and organize the ideas into some two dozen or more hypothesis, depending upon verbatim quotes where available to expound the subtleties and variations expressed on any one subject.

Sources of the Problem

Eight major categories of reasons are suggested as the areas that are the sources of the problems:

1. Changing demographics are a deterrent to newspaper reading: In the past, newspaper reading habits have been spurred by family and community interests and obligations. Long term rootedness in a community meant increased interest in local people, local events, local politics and even local stores and movies. Now the problem is how to reach, interest, and service young people whose life style is based on freedom from responsibility, delayed commitment, increased mobility, money to spend -- and an interest in self.

2. Reading and Educational Levels: Television, educational methods, deteriorating school systems are seen as a root cause by many of the publishers, editors and experts: "This is not a reading generation," they claim. This argument cannot be brushed aside for if a definitive study proves that this is indeed the case, the industry may be forced to take an even more active role in encouraging reading skills. There are, however, counter-indications to this argument -- especially, the enormous increase in the sale of paperbacks to young people, the success of the special interest publications such as PSYCHOLOGY TODAY and PEOPLE, the mounting sales of hobby magazines and the performance of at least some of the so-called alternative or "underground" press.

Also, when young people were discussing that reading papers was "work" -- it had far more to do with formality of the language, the format of the paper, the length of the articles, the subject matter, bulk and type size than it did with reading skills.

Whichever way the wind blows, the final outcome points to the same direction: more direct, simple language, greater simplicity in presentation, better organization, more use of visual and graphic material. The difficulty with the reading skills explanation alone, on the other hand, is that it may turn out to be a cause -- but more difficult to solve.

3. Television is the Villain: The industry and the experts are both strongly committed to the principle that television has the most direct casual relationship with nonregular newspaper reading among the population in general and youth specifically. Television is regarded as a negative influence in a number of different ways.

.... Competition for time.

.... Limits the need for newspapers.

.... Has created a visual rather than a verbal generation.

.... Has generated a new form of nonlinear communication -- what McLuhan referred to as "The medium is the message".

.... Requires less of the participant. Television viewing is regarded as passive; newspaper reading as active.

The young people do not fully accept this diagnosis:

.... First, there is some evidence (which needs further corroboration) that heavy television viewing goes hand-in-hand with newspaper reading rather than detracting from it.

.... Second, the young people see the television experience as establishing new guidelines and criteria for newspapers:

More emphasis on features and analysis; less on headlines.

Capsulated news, news summaries.

Better packaging, easier to find features.

More personalization.

More presentation of both sides of the agrument.

Greater use of the news magazine format.

More representation of youth as part of the cadre.

More coverage of controversial subjects.

More attempts to supplement television news rather than to repeat it.

More change, innovation, surprises.

4. Life Styles: In addition to demographic changes, the newspaper industry and the experts pointed to changes in life styles -- calling attention to a number of trends which could be affecting newspaper readership levels.

.... The explosion of leisure time pursuits, all competing for young people's free hours.

.... The increased number of young women entering the work force -- with no time for at-home newspaper reading in the morning or relaxing with the paper in the afternoon.

.... The breakdown of public transportation and the increased use of private cars and car pools.

.... The increase in the number of apartment house dwellers and the resultant decline in community ties.

.... The prolonged educational phase and the demands of a rigorous graduate schedule on reading time.

The young people also see changing life styles as a factor in their diminished newspaper reading loyalties -- but from a very different viewpoint. Their comments indicate that:

.... More leisure time means more new and unmet information needs.

.... Greater affluence means more things to choose from in the way of entertainment, places to go, things to do -- and the need for reviews of their books, plays, music.

.... More education means greater discernment in making critical choices on products to purchase, places to go.

.... A different life style raises new and different personal problems requiring more knowledge of self: living alone; raising children without a husband; male/female relationships; a career versus homemaking; acquisitiveness versus a simpler life style.

5. Acquiring the Habit: The industry, the experts and the young people all agree that this generation started off with a weakened tradition of newspaper reading compared to previous groups.

1. Mom and Dad were more excited with television than they were with the daily newspaper.
2. Comics, serials, etc. on television diminished the importance of the Sunday paper to the younger generation.
3. Outside of local school sports, it was as easy to become a sports buff watching television as it was to read about it.
4. Watching television was something you could do with your gang; reading a newspaper was a more solitary experience.

And then there is the unresolved question of the effectiveness of the Newspaper in the Classroom Program, with no definitive data yet turned up on its effectiveness in building future readers or creating more understanding of the industry and its role. One conclusion of even this preliminary investigation is that a systematic evaluation of the program is overdue.

> .... Some young people liked it; others hated it and felt it took all the pleasure away from newspapers; many had never heard of the program.

Even supporters of the concept raise questions about its execution, the role of the teacher, etc.

6. Image Problems: A central role for the newspaper industry and its major organizations appears to be in the area of image building. Part of the problem is credibility, a situation faced by most institutions; the other part deals with very specific attributes associated or not associated with the industry as a whole: glamour, good citizenship, innovation, change, technology, youthfulness, vigor, responsiveness.

Maybe the reporter got lost on television in the plethora of medical dramas; perhaps Hecht's "Front Page" belongs to another era; perhaps the correspondents who endanger their lives on the front lines all over the world are associated with television --

but talk to young people about newspapers and newspaper reporters, editors, writers -- and the image that emerges is of tired, middle-aged men. Publishers smoke big cigars and maintain the status quo. They can all describe a television studio -- and on-location crews, but not a city room.

7. Product Problems: Members of the industry, the experts and the young people all agree that irrelevance is the major drawback of the newspapers for this generation. Papers are seen as written for middle-aged audiences. With few exceptions, all parties agree that "soft news" and service has become increasingly important. The soft news theme, however, should not be exaggerated -- for right now many of the 18 to 24 year old age group are also reading papers primarily for:

National news
World news
Local news
Sports results and details
Advertising
Comment and analysis

Other criticisms raised, especially by the regular readers, include:

Charges of Bias

Inadequate investigative reporting

Size and bulk -- with tabloid the favorite format

Unattractiveness -- lack of color, good pictures, graphics

Bad organization; too many skips

Sameness, every day looks the same

Better indexing; more news in brief

More on subjects such as environment, consumerism, coping with inflation, psychology, getting to know yourself better

More compartmentalization along the news magazine format

Most of all they are looking for a reason to read the paper every day. A little news goes a long way unless it is dramatic, salient, different, explanatory, new.

8. The Generation Gap: Lack of communication and understanding undoubtedly represents the biggest chasm between the industry and the young adult market.

Young adults feel that newspapers neither understand them nor "like" them. They accuse the industry of tokenism, in its coverage, staffing and recognition of their interests and needs. The industry is half hoping that this will all go away. Others are counting on a good product to do the job. Some are worried that too many concessions to young readers are already costing them older and middle-aged readers.

Evaluating the Causes

Some of the differences between the young people and the industry are also reflected in the priorities they give to each of the major causes.

The next table shows the extent of concurrence and differences among the three groups.

THE INDUSTRY, EXPERTS AND YOUTH

RANK THE CAUSES OF LOWERED READERSHIP

	Industry	Experts	Young People
	%	%	%
Demographic trends	4	5	10
Reading Skills	3	6	*
Competition from T.V. news	1	4	7
Impact of visualization	2	1	9
Image problems	10	10	8
Product problems/saliency	5	8	2
Product problems/packaging/ readability	9	7	3
The generation gap	8	9	1
Life style	6	2	4
Specialized Media	7	3	6
Bias	*	11	5

The Overriding Theme

Each of the causes helps shed some light on the nature of the problem, however, the results of this first exploratory stage suggests that the young people have hit on the nut of the problem with their reference to a generation gap. For basically what this study reveals is an industry caught in the vortex of a new and different consumer climate strongly influenced by a new set of personal and social values.

The pull and tug is based on the difficulties of adapting a traditional institution -- the American newspaper, rooted in the importance of community, family, family roles, ritual, acceptance of authority and government -- to the needs of a new constituency.

Many of the papers across the country have made changes and concessions to this new breed of reader -- with varying degrees of success.

.... Women's pages have become family pages.

.... Controversial subjects such as homosexuality, unwed couples, communal living are handled more openly and freely.

.... Financial columns are directed to the

> women as a decision maker rather than the family budget administrator.
>
> .... Several of the papers have introduced successful entertainment supplements directed at the younger market.

Yet, even the results of this preliminary research, as well as the statistics, suggest the basic chasm of understanding which continues to exist between the industry and young people.

An essential part of the problem is that the industry is operating on hunches during a time of major change. Adding to the difficulty is the fact that many of the old tools don't work as well as they did: male versus female appeals, city versus suburban, income, education. So, new guidelines are needed -- a different sort of map.

As a starting point -- perhaps as a challenge -- we are wrapping up this summary with a hypothetical map, using as input the hypotheses generated by this study and some of our background in monitoring of social changes.

The blank spaces next to each category provide room for examining what the industry and individual papers are now doing, compared to the changes implied by the new trends.

What should make the mapping more interesting is that while you are thinking about your young readers and nonreaders, you probably are at the same time examining at least some of the major causes for overall newspaper circulation decline. For our own studies of social trends indicate that over 50% of all adults, 16 years of age or over, are part of the new values.

A HYPOTHETICAL MAP OF THE OLD VERSUS THE NEW MARKETPLACE

THE TRADITIONAL NEWSPAPER AUDIENCE	THE NEW AUDIENCE
The American Family	**The American Family**
Permanent commitment	Commitment -- not necessarily permanent
Explicit sex roles	Blurred sex roles
Children oriented	Childlessness accepted
Family over individual	Focus on self
Togetherness a plus	Individualism
Rituals a plus	Rejection of ritual
The Community	**The Community**
Based on age, religion, ethnicity	Natural interests
Bounded by neighborhood	Bound by values
Obligation	Voluntary
	Transitional
Role of Women	**Role of Women**
Goal: marriage and children -- most outside interests discouraged	May include careerism
	Housewife now a profession
Education: oriented toward wife and motherhood	Non-domestic success goals
	Self-fulfillment, few prohibitions
Work: from necessity	
Family role excluded: basic earning power, major financial decisions	Equal financial responsibility

THE TRADITIONAL NEWSPAPER AUDIENCE	THE NEW AUDIENCE
Religion	Religion
Organized religion an important personal value	Organized religion a declining personal value
	Interest in the occult, the mystical as part of learning about self
Criteria	Criteria
Technology	The natural
Bigness	Personalization
Popularity	Simplification
Complexity	Meaningfulness to the individual
Functionalism	
Communication	Communication
Verbal	Nonverbal as well as verbal
Formal	Informal
Mass	One to one
The Need to Know	The Need to Know
Obligation	Part of self-understanding
Nonselective	Selectivity
Goal-oriented	Self-oriented

THE TRADITIONAL NEWSPAPER AUDIENCE	THE NEW AUDIENCE
Leisure Time	**Leisure Time**
Social	Solitude or social
Competitive	Noncompetitive
Useful	Self-fulfilling
Structured	Unstructured
Pleasing others	Doing what you want
Values	**Values**
All "new values" people are alike	Acceptance/modification/ rejection/innovation

The Balance Sheet

To place the multitude of comments and suggestions in some contextual form, we have reviewed the group discussions and other available material on newspaper reading and nonreading among young people and have come up with two working diagrams for testing -- one which very roughly tries to establish the current attractions and deterrents (Diagram A) and the other to suggest which are the characteristics of the new values which appear to encourage or discourage newspaper reading. (Diagram B)

THE BALANCE SHEET
Diagram A

Major Reasons For Reading A Newspaper (18-24 year olds)

Entertainment news and features

Advertising

Sports

National/International news

Listings (Movies, television, etc.)

Classified Ads

Food guide

Hobbies

Exposes

Family/Women

Health/Science

Editorials

Comics

Major Reasons for Not Reading a Newspaper

Bias

Dependence on television

Lack of saliency

Boredom - everyday is the same

Too big/too much/too confusing

Lack of time

Too much information I don't want; too little I do want

Too sensational -- too much junk

Inferior paper

Never got the habit

Only read them when I need them (listings/ads)

THE BALANCE SHEET

(continued)

Not at home enough

Sunday is enough

Costs to much

Not interested in who gets married or dies

CHARACTERISTICS WHICH APPEAR TO GO WITH NEWSPAPER READING
(Diagram B)

Purposefulness

Multiplicity of interests

Active search for self (books, magazines, classes)

Career oriented/meaningful work

Self-improvement

Personal creativity/cultural self-enhancement

Acceptance of diversity

Female Careerism

New forms of familism

CHARACTERISTICS WHICH APPEAR TO GO WITH NONNEWSPAPER READING

Passivity

Sensuous

Purposelessness

Thrill seeking

Mysticism

Alienation

Anti-structure

Anti-bigness

No personal attachments

Anti-establishment

NOT CLEAR CUT

Personalization

Liberal sex attitudes

Novelty and change

The new naturalism

Summary

Like most pilot projects, the first exploration has produced a minimum of definitive information -- but a host of informational needs. Hopefully, it has established the youth market as a major priority for the industry -- not only as an important segment -- but as a barometer of change, a guide to the future and a aid in decision making. By young people, we are talking about men and women between the ages of 16 and 30.

Our first candidate, therefore, for more research is the developing and filling in of a "real" map -- identifying and measuring those social trends among young people which are relevant to the industry, and their implications. Other candidates for research suggested by this project include:

A. Longitudinal studies to answer the questions of those who look to the "settling in" process.
B. Special studies to separate the generational effects from the maturational effects.
C. Evaluation of programs such as the NIC.
D. Attitude studies dealing specifically with image problems of the industry -- to determine their seriousness.

E. Readership patterns analyzed by the new demography.

The starting point, the methodology, and the details, however, are less critical than the commitment.

FOOTNOTES

1. Newspaper Advertising Bureau, 1971

2. THE NEW MORALITY, Daniel Yankelovich, McGraw-Hill, 1974

3. W.R. Simmons Research, 1974

4. Combined Yankelovich, Skelly and White, Inc. studies